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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE UNITED
NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT
AND DEVELOPMENT

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Agenda item 2 (a)

PREPARATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT
AND DEVELOPMENT ON THE BASIS OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION
44/228 AND TAKING INTO ACCOUNT OTHER RELEVANT GENERAL ASSEMBLY
RESOLUTIONS: ACTIVITIES OF THE CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT

Introductory statement made by the Secretary-General
of the Conference at the fourth session of the
Preparatory Committee

I join with you, Mr. Chairman, and I know with all distinguished delegates, in welcoming our eminent Secretary-General and extending our deep gratitude for his interest in and commitment to your work and to the goals of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, as evidenced by his valuable and enlightened statement. His leadership and his support mean a very great deal to us and will be indispensable to the success of our common task.

With the beginning of this fourth session of the Preparatory Committee, we have entered the final stages of preparations for the Conference, which, three months from today, will be under way in Rio de Janeiro. I know that I need not stress to you the importance of the work you must undertake, and complete, during the next five weeks. The task you face is a formidable one, but with the constructive spirit of cooperation and compromise that this Committee has manifested in its work to date, and with the full commitment of all its members to the success of our common efforts, I am confident that it is achievable. I can assure you that your secretariat will do everything possible to facilitate and support your efforts.

Let me make some observations which I hope may be helpful to you as you begin your work.

The task of preparing the documents you required of us for this session was a monumental one and the task you have faced in reviewing them has been equally so. The documentation is extensive and in many respects complex, reflecting as it does the broad range of issues that this Committee has to address to fulfil the mandate given to it by the General Assembly in resolution 44/228. Much of it consists of documents prepared by others at the request of the General Assembly or the Preparatory Committee.

I should like to comment briefly on the principal agenda areas you will be addressing.

The consolidated draft of the Earth Charter (A/CONF.151/PC/WG.III/L.8/Rev.1) presents a compendium of the proposals made by delegations. In the aggregate, they provide a rich variety of ideas as to both the form and the content of this important instrument. But the task of distilling from this a relatively short list of agreed principles will demand a concerted effort. In light of the heavy demands on Working Group III at this final session, I should like to suggest that a special subgroup be set up to facilitate negotiations on the Charter and ensure that these can be completed successfully in the relatively short time we have to do this.

The draft of Agenda 21 (A/CONF.151/PC/100 and Add.1-27) constitutes the core of the work before you. When negotiated, it will represent the principal outcome of the Conference. Each chapter is the product of an extensive work process to which the relevant United Nations agencies, organizations and programmes as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, regional conferences and national reports, have contributed in accordance with the guidance and direction provided by the Preparatory Committee and its Working Groups. The series of working parties established at the secretariat level for this purpose has worked extremely well and in my view provides a valuable model for the work that must continue following the Conference.

Underlying the development of Agenda 21 is the basic premise that the issues it addresses are systemic in nature and cannot be effectively managed without taking account of the cause and effect linkages among them. Agenda 21 is designed to facilitate this process and provide the basic framework for and guide to integrated programme development and decision-making in the post-Rio period. It should be borne in mind that the development of Agenda 21 is part of a process of integrating environment and development that began with the Stockholm Conference in 1972 and was given special focus and impetus by the recommendations of the Brundtland Commission. It also builds on the experience and insights of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), as well as on the development agencies and organizations of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental and non-governmental sources. Similarly, it must continue to be seen following Rio as the centre-piece of an ongoing process of coordination, monitoring, review and revision.

The Agenda 21 documents must be further shaped and completed by this final session of the Preparatory Committee. As you have received them, the Agenda 21 documents reflect the current state of analysis and capacities for

action; therefore some action proposals are much more fully developed and defined than others. In some cases, time constraints have limited our ability to absorb and fully reflect all available contributions to our professional work. My secretariat colleagues will therefore make available, through the Chairman of each Working Group, supplementary information which you may wish to consider. One of the primary tasks you face in this final session is to determine goals, targets, allocation of institutional responsibilities and priorities for immediate action. While the documents before you provide the basis for this, it nevertheless represents a demanding task.

It is, of course, desirable to agree on specific language to the maximum extent possible, and some encouraging progress was made in this respect at the third session of the Preparatory Committee, in Geneva. But I should like to suggest that it is not necessary for this Committee to write the entire Agenda 21 in "tablets of stone". My point is that if Agenda 21 is to provide the framework for continuing action after Rio, its chapters will need to be negotiated with the expectation that they will be subject to follow-up and review on a continuing basis in the post-Rio period.

We are preparing an information guide which presents the contents of Agenda 21 in a summary form within the context of its principal substantive themes. A preliminary version of this is available here. It will, of course, be modified to take into account the decisions in respect of Agenda 21 taken at the present session.

At the end of this session I would hope that the Committee can agree on a single decision recommending to the Conference its acceptance of Agenda 21 as the agreed programme of environment and development action by the international community in the post-Rio period, and commend it for necessary further action to the Governments, international agencies and organizations that will have primary responsibility for implementing it.

You will recall that we were asked to cost the action proposals included in Agenda 21 and the results of this are contained in the documents. Let me point out, however, that this does not represent a "budget" for Agenda 21. It would not have been feasible to develop estimates in sufficient detail to permit presentation of a budget. The aggregate figure of about \$125 billion per year, which is derived from costing of individual programmes, must therefore be seen as indicative of the orders of magnitude of external concessional funding that would be required by developing countries for full implementation of Agenda 21. This is some \$70 billion in excess of existing official development assistance (ODA) flows of about \$55 billion per year. It is important to recognize that most of the costs - some four to five times \$125 billion - would have to be provided by developing countries themselves. External funding would therefore cover only a modest portion of these costs but will be of critical importance in complementing and supporting developing country efforts. I realize, of course, that it will be extremely difficult both for developing and for donor countries to reach these levels in the short term. But in Rio de Janeiro we must make a significant start.

The issue of new and additional financial resources is critical to the success of the Conference. We have been doing everything possible to facilitate the process of consideration by Governments and consultation amongst them on this important matter, and I very much hope that countries members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), in particular, will be especially forthcoming in their position on it at this final session. While I do not intend to present firm recommendations of my own in this respect, I do feel it might be useful to share with you some of the views I have formed as a result of my consultations, which may facilitate agreement at Rio on new and additional financial resources.

The estimated order of magnitude figure of \$70 billion a year of additional assistance to developing countries represents more than a doubling of existing levels of ODA. I realize that under today's conditions, this is not politically realistic in terms of appealing to donors for more "foreign aid" in traditional terms. Yet it is not a high price-tag if seen in terms of global environmental security. There is also compelling evidence that the costs of action are far less than the costs of inaction in terms of effects on human health, degradation of natural resources and remedial costs. To put it in perspective, \$125 billion is less than 1 per cent of current levels of gross national product (GNP) of the principal donor countries and less than some of the most generous of them are already providing. It also compares with the some \$1,000 billion being devoted to military expenditures. Environmental "costs" are more in the nature of investments in maintaining the natural capital stock of societies. At a time when Governments are concerned about the economic implications of reducing military expenditures, they should examine the important potential of environmental investments, both domestic and international, for economic revitalization, job creation and redeployment of research and development capacities.

Nevertheless, it would not be realistic to expect under current conditions of economic difficulty and budgetary constraints that new funds of the magnitude required to meet all Agenda 21 needs could be immediately forthcoming. What is needed is a substantial initial commitment of new and additional resources, which represents an important and concrete step towards meeting overall needs, accompanied by the establishment of a continuing process through which these needs can be met over reasonable periods of time. This would permit the immediate launching of Agenda 21 and related activities in respect of climate change and biodiversity that will ultimately be provided for in the conventions now under negotiation. Such an initial commitment would need to be of the order of several billions of dollars per year to permit an effective start on the implementation of Agenda 21.

It would also need to be accompanied by the enunciation of some basic principles that should underlie the financial arrangements in respect of global conventions that place non-discretionary obligations on developing countries.

It seems to be broadly recognized that new funds cannot all flow through any single channel. A package of immediate measures is required. A number of proposals have been made on what such a package might include:

(a) Proposals have been made for the establishment of new funds linked to Agenda 21, notably the proposal of China and the Group of 77 for a Green Fund. At the same time there is a strong preference on the part of some to use existing institutions, at least as a starting point, in particular through replenishment of a modified Global Environment Facility (GEF) at something of the order of three or four times its current funding level to finance the incremental costs to developing countries of meeting important global environmental priorities. This would, of course, require agreement on changes in the provisions for governance of GEF and on its mandate. I am pleased to note the progress being made in this respect. However, as GEF would, in any event, fund only a portion of Agenda 21, most increased funding for it will need to come through other channels. In particular, this would apply to financing of development and poverty-related issues, based on a credible commitment to a specific timetable for attainment of widely accepted targets;

(b) The current negotiations on replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA) provides a very good opportunity in this respect. The inclusion of a significant component of new funds as an "Earth increment" in the current round of replenishment would enable IDA to meet important development needs identified in Agenda 21. The Agenda 21 proposals dealing with poverty and related issues such as health and education, land, water, forestry and human settlements, provide a useful basis for this. Similarly, "Earth increments" could be added to the funds available to other funding "windows" and organizations, particularly the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the regional development banks and bilateral programmes;

(c) Given the important emphasis that virtually all developing countries have placed on technology transfer and the need to strengthen their professional and institutional capacities, additional funding also needs to be provided for these purposes. While such funding must come from a number of multilateral and bilateral sources, it would be logical to have some significant new funding concentrated in UNDP to enable it to take a lead in respect of technology transfer and capacity-building. This would be supplemented perhaps by a consultative group, similar to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), to facilitate the mobilizing and deploying of funds from other sources required to meet this critically important need;

(d) Increased support for the Fund of UNEP, the budgets of other United Nations agencies and organizations and regional commissions to enable them to carry out their respective important roles in implementing Agenda 21;

(e) Increased bilateral assistance, which may include important new unilateral initiatives on the part of individual countries;

(f) A large-scale programme of debt reduction directly related to helping developing countries meet their needs for the implementation of Agenda 21;

(g) Special incentives for private investment in sustainable development;

(h) Mobilization of voluntary private support for the programmes of non-governmental organizations.

There have also been some interesting proposals for new and innovative means of financing. One that would seem to hold particular promise is the issuance of tradeable emission permits. Proposals have also been made for taxes, fees or user charges to be levied on particular products, services and/or transactions to give effect to the "polluter-pays" principle. Utilizing part of the proceeds of a carbon or energy tax to meet international needs has also been proposed. Political consensus has not yet developed to the point required to achieve agreement at Rio on implementation of these measures. But this consensus will, I hope, crystallize so that these measures may receive strong support and impetus at Rio.

The package of measures to meet the need for new and additional financial resources should be accompanied by a strengthening of the processes of coordinating the mobilization and deployment of these resources. This could be done by using issue-based consultative forums to complement the existing system of consultative groups and round tables. The United Nations system could play a lead in this process.

Former Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita of Japan and Mr. Gaishi Hiraiwa, Chairman of the principal industrial association of Japan, Keidanren, will be hosting a high-level meeting in Tokyo shortly after the present session of the Preparatory Committee to lend guidance and support to international efforts to mobilize the financial resources required to give effect to the decisions taken at the Earth Summit. I very much welcome this timely and promising initiative.

I am convinced that a review of the existing economic policies and the systems of incentives and penalties by which Governments, in both industrialized and developing countries, motivate the economic behaviour of their people and corporations, including agricultural and other subsidies, would reveal the extent to which they, however unintentionally, have the effect of providing incentives for environmentally unsound and unsustainable behaviour, while imposing immense costs on consumers and taxpayers. I would hope that at Rio Governments will agree to carry out such reviews and to reorient their policies and fiscal, tax and subsidy systems so as to provide positive incentives to sustainable development. Document A/CONF.151/PC/100/Add.8 outlines the potential for the use of economic instruments to achieve these purposes. At the same time, such reviews will, I am sure, demonstrate how most needs for environmental expenditures could be met through redeployment of existing resources.

Successful completion of the current round of multilateral trade negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) will also have a critically important effect on the Conference and the prospects both for its success and for the implementation of its results. Strengthening

the international trading system would generate new financial resources for both industrialized and developing countries, while a breakdown of negotiations would have a negative effect on the system of international cooperation on which the results of the Earth Summit will depend. At the same time, the inclusion of the environmental dimension in GATT negotiations must be used to ensure that the functioning of the international trading system contributes positively to sustainable development and is not used to impose unfair and unilateral constraints on the trade of developing countries. Indeed, if developing countries had totally free access to the markets of the industrialized world, they could earn much of what they require to finance their own development.

In the final analysis, the question of meeting the costs of saving the Earth is one of political will and priorities. The nations and people of our planet must be prepared to accept global environmental security as an important, indeed indispensable priority. For if we do not succeed in moving to a sustainable pathway in our economic life, our future will be at risk in both economic and environmental terms. The threats to the Earth's environment and its life-support systems represent the ultimate security risk. The costs of averting these risks are modest in relation to the amounts we have been spending, and will continue to spend, on traditional military security. At the same time, meeting these costs holds great potential for revitalization of economic growth and development. What is needed is a change in our political mind-set and in the ordering of our priorities. This is what must happen at Rio if we are to succeed in meeting the goals the General Assembly has set for the Conference.

As to technology transfer, I have already referred to the importance of capacity-building, which is one of the most important elements of the package of technology transfer and cooperation proposals included in documents A/CONF.151/PC/100/Add.9-11. I believe these provide a sound basis for a decision by the Preparatory Committee on this important issue, which is so closely linked to that of new and additional financial resources. A promising prospect in this field is opened up by the decision taken by a Conference of African States, held in Algeria in February 1992, to establish an African Agency for Biotechnology.

You will also be considering the question of institutional mechanisms within the United Nations following the Conference. There seems to be a strong consensus that the emphasis should be on strengthening the existing agencies and organizations of the United Nations system and the mechanisms to ensure their cooperation and coordination.

The proposals presented to the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme provide a basis for examining the particular ways in which UNEP can best be strengthened as the primary focal point for environment leadership of the United Nations system. It is, of course, most important that this be done in the context of the need for closer integration of environment and development activities throughout the system.

Any new institutional arrangements within the United Nations must also take account of the fact that other agencies and organizations, including non-governmental organizations, are now prime actors in the environment field, as well as in environment-related development activities. UNDP is already funding environment-related projects at a level several times greater than the total budget of UNEP, and the aggregate environment-related budgets of other United Nations agencies and organizations are several times those of UNEP. This underscores the need for closer cooperation among them and for measures that recognize the importance of their environment-related programmes in implementing Agenda 21, as well as for making them more accountable for the environmental dimensions of their programmes. Here, UNEP might play a particularly important role.

But this can be done effectively only in conjunction with much closer linkages between environment and development activities throughout the United Nations system. It is in this area that a need for strengthened institutional arrangements is becoming increasingly apparent. Above all, the momentum generated by the UNCED process should not be lost. Some kind of monitoring and review process is essential. It is important, however, that the post-Rio review process apply to all countries, industrial and developing, as well as the United Nations system and other agencies and organizations involved in the implementation of Agenda 21.

Of particular importance is the need to provide for an intergovernmental body, within the United Nations, to review progress in carrying out the decisions taken at the Conference, particularly in respect of Agenda 21, to provide broad policy guidance to Governments as well as direction to the United Nations system, and to facilitate coordination with respect to these and related matters. This need might be met by reconstituting the mandate of an existing body, such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development or it could take the form of a new body, such as a commission similar to the Commission on Human Rights or the Commission on Narcotics Drugs, as some have suggested, or a committee of the General Assembly or of the Economic and Social Council. Whatever mechanism is selected for these purposes, provision could be made for regular meetings at the ministerial level and, perhaps, even at the summit level.

Such an institutional mechanism will need to be structured in such a way as to give effect to the global partnership that I hope will emerge from the Earth Summit. This means it would need to provide a framework for guidance and review of the ongoing processes of negotiation that must take place in the various relevant forums between donors and recipients in respect of the allocation and utilization of new and additional financial resources. Implementation of the concept of "partners in additionality" would involve contracts or compacts between developing countries and donors to ensure that developing countries have access to additional resources on a predictable basis over time under conditions to which they agree, not conditions that are unilaterally imposed.

Any intergovernmental body would need to be served by a secretariat that would perform functions in the post-Rio period comparable to those that have been performed by the Conference secretariat in preparation for the Conference. Of course, all of this will have to be done in the larger context of the important changes now taking place in the United Nations Secretariat and the measures for further restructuring now being considered at both the intergovernmental and secretariat levels. Indeed, there have been some suggestions that the initial institutional arrangements for follow-up of the Conference be interim in nature, subject to further review in the light of overall decisions on restructuring.

But the structure of any such review and follow-up mechanisms is perhaps less important than the need to ensure that they have the capacity to perform their functions effectively. Assigning the responsibility for follow-up of Rio to an entity or entities that lack such capacity would be akin to sending it to the "Dead Letter Office".

Another important point that has also arisen in some of my discussions with Governments is the need for provision to be made for a high-level intergovernmental review of the implementation of the decisions taken at the Earth Summit after a period of three or four years. This could take the form of a special high-level session of the intergovernmental body with responsibility for review and coordination, or a special session of the General Assembly.

It is of paramount importance to bear in mind the fact that all the institutional arrangements that may be put in place at the international level are designed to meet the needs and requirements of member countries to provide support for their national policies and actions and to establish the basis for international cooperation in respect of actions that can only or best be taken in concert with others. For it is at the national level and at the regional level that most actions take place and where the primary decisions on goals and priorities are taken.

Thus, the ultimate test of the success of Rio and the efficacy of Agenda 21 will be the extent to which they are translated into changed policies and practices within countries to effect the transition, each in its own way, to sustainable development. This surely means that it would be important at Rio for each Government to commit itself to translate the decisions of the Conference into a "National Agenda 21" - programmes and policies designed to give effect in each country to the decisions made at Rio. Governments will also wish to ensure that United Nations agencies and organizations, and other intergovernmental organizations integrate the Earth Summit decisions into their programmes. It would be particularly important that World Bank consultative groups and UNDP roundtables integrate the provisions of Agenda 21 into their mandates and activities and that regional organizations do the same.

Mr. Jean Ripert, Chairman of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change, will report to you this afternoon on the current status of the negotiations on that Convention following the fifth session of the Committee (New York, 18-28 February 1992). We shall also hear a report on the status of the negotiations on the Convention on Biological Diversity by the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Convention, Ambassador Sánchez. Both of these negotiations are in their final critical stages and, while in each case important issues remain unresolved, there is still reason to hope that framework conventions will be available for signature at Rio.

Encouraging progress has been made in negotiating the forestry principles. If existing differences can be resolved, these could provide a basis for agreement at Rio on the establishment of a negotiating process following the Conference.

I should also like to commend to your attention the proposal made at the African Ministerial Meeting at Abidjan in November 1991 that a convention be negotiated on desertification, which is such a critically important issue for a number of developing countries, especially in Africa. This would be a very timely and valuable means of ensuring that desertification is accorded the priority it deserves.

A total of 120 national reports have now been received. They are of impressive quality and represent a uniquely valuable contribution to the preparatory process. A substantial number were received in time to enable us to take them into account in the preparation of our documents for the present session, and we have made available an overview of our analysis of the principal elements of these reports (see A/CONF.151/PC/98). The reports contain so much valuable information that we should like to do everything possible to see that they get the widest possible circulation, including the preparation of a special publication based on them. I also understand from many of the Governments concerned that the process of preparing them has been an extremely valuable one. Indeed, it may be useful to consider periodic updates as part of the ongoing process of reviewing the implementation of Agenda 21.

This Committee has, as you know, agreed on modalities for the participation of non-governmental organizations in its meetings and in the Conference itself. I am pleased to say that more than 1,000 non-governmental organizations have now been accredited or have applied for accreditation under these arrangements and the participation of developing countries has increased substantially. Organizations and civil society groups from the Commonwealth of Independent States and Eastern and Central Europe are also participating fully. Participation by non-governmental organizations is broadly representative of both traditional and non-traditional groups and constituencies, including scientists, women, indigenous people, religious organizations, professional associations, trade unions, business and industry, parliamentarians, local authorities, youth, children and many others. They have made extremely important substantive contributions to our preparatory

work, and their own preparations have been accompanied by an immense amount of activity - seminars, conferences and special study and dialogue processes.

A series of regular interactive briefing sessions/presentations is being scheduled during the present session of the Preparatory Committee; on 10 March, the Business Council for Sustainable Development will be giving a briefing on technology cooperation. I have had the privilege of meeting with many of these groups throughout the world and have been greatly encouraged and deeply moved by some of these experiences, including my meetings with indigenous peoples in Brazil and participation in the Women's Congress in Miami as well as in some of the public forums held in various regions of the world by the International Facilitating Committee.

The International Facilitating Committee has undertaken the challenging task of preparing a Global Forum in Rio de Janeiro as the focal point for a broad range of non-governmental events to coincide with the Earth Summit. But they urgently need further support to ensure completion of this task, which will make what I regard as an indispensable contribution to the whole Earth Summit experience.

As you know, the arrangements for participation by non-governmental organizations do not provide for their inclusion in the negotiations that are carried out among Governments. As this final session of the Preparatory Committee will consist almost entirely of negotiating sessions, non-governmental organizations will be denied their valuable contribution to your work if they are entirely excluded from these meetings. Accordingly, I hope that every effort will be made to facilitate their attendance as observers at these sessions to the extent possible, while making provision for closed sessions when necessary.

The entire UNCED experience has underscored the increasingly important role of non-governmental organizations, not only in the contributions they can make to such international consultative processes as UNCED, but also in their substantial capacities for carrying out the programmes and operations that will make them prime actors in implementing Agenda 21. There are also a host of new and non-traditional groups and organizations, particularly in developing countries, which existing accreditation arrangements do not adequately take into account. The UNCED process has pointed up the need for a review and strengthening of existing arrangements for relating non-governmental organizations to the United Nations. I hope that this Preparatory Committee will recommend to the Conference that these arrangements be reviewed to take account of the many changes that have occurred affecting the role of non-governmental organizations and their relationship with the United Nations.

As you will note, the pace of our programme of public information and awareness concerning the Conference has accelerated and will continue to do so right up until the Conference itself. The centre-piece of these activities is the Earth Pledge, and, as you know, I am inviting your Governments to facilitate the widest possible dissemination of this within your countries. I

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should like to record our special gratitude to the non-governmental and media organizations, as well as corporations, that have lent their support and assistance to this campaign. I hope that each of you will also give it your support by signing the Earth Pledge during the present session.

In Brazil itself, preparations for hosting the Conference are proceeding apace. You will be receiving a briefing on this tomorrow. But I remain confident that the arrangements being provided by our Brazilian hosts both at the Rio Conference Centre itself and in the many other related activities being carried out in Rio de Janeiro and elsewhere will ensure a welcome that is fully in accord with the finest traditions of Brazilian hospitality and the historic nature of the Conference itself. I am deeply grateful for the full cooperation we have received from our Brazilian hosts at the levels of the federal Government and the state and city governments of Rio de Janeiro, as well as the many other Brazilian organizations that are contributing to making the Earth Summit one of the most memorable events ever.

I want to extend my deep thanks to all those who have contributed to the Voluntary Fund to support the participation of developing country representatives in the present session of the Preparatory Committee, as well as to our Trust Fund for Preparatory Activities and to ECOFUND-92. These voluntary contributions have been indispensable to our work. At the same time, I should like to appeal to Governments for their additional generous support to the Voluntary Fund to permit developing country participation in the Conference itself at Rio. In order to be available in time to enable countries to utilize it, we would need to have the funds in hand no later than 1 May 1992.

A number of Governments have brought to our attention the fact that the two final days of the Conference, which have been designated especially for events involving the participation of heads of Government, could coincide in part with the Eide, the holiest occasion on the Islamic calendar. Accordingly, you will need to consider changes in these dates to facilitate participation of as many leaders as possible in the Summit events.

Each of the issues on which I have touched and the many others that will demand your attention during the next five weeks must be resolved at this final session if leaders of your Governments are to have before them when they meet at Rio a set of clear, well-developed and agreed recommendations on which they can base the important decisions they must take there. It will not be feasible to leave issues unresolved on the expectation that they can be dealt with at Rio. The small amount of negotiating time that might be available there will have to be reserved for the one or two critical issues that must by their nature be kept open until then.

The work you do here will provide the basis for the decisions to be taken at Rio, which would unite all nations and people, East, West, North and South in a new global partnership. Accordingly, the success of the Earth Summit in establishing the basis for this new global partnership will depend directly on the success you achieve at this final session of the Preparatory Committee.

That success will not come easily, but, as we begin our sessions today, I am confident that it is achievable. I am equally confident that the commitment, the good will and the skills of the representatives assembled here, manifesting the political will of their Governments, will ensure the successful completion of the work that began here just two years ago. You will thus have established the foundations for a historic success in Rio in producing the new global partnership that will set the world community on to a new course to a more sustainable, secure and equitable future as we move into the twenty-first century. The success of the Earth Summit is thus in a very real sense in your hands.
